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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 14th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 28 September 1992, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. GANEV (Bulgaria)

later: Sheikh Salem Sabah Al Saleh AL SABAH (Kuwait)
(Vice-President)

- General debate [9] (continued

Statements made by

Mr. Brahimi (Algeria)
Mr. Essy (Côte d'Ivoire)
Mr. Al-Shara (Syrian Arab Republic)

Address by the Honourable Mr. Edward Fenech-Adami, Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta

Statement made by

Mr. Acharya (Nepal)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the Official Records of the General Assembly.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. BRAHIMI (Algeria) (interpretation from Arabic): Your election to the presidency of the General Assembly, Sir, is a tribute to you and to your country, friendly Bulgaria, which has risen to the challenges of the times with a combination of determination and wisdom. Your qualities as a statesman, which you have amply demonstrated, and your skills as a seasoned diplomat are solid assets which ensure the success of our work. I wish to congratulate you most warmly on your election to this post and to assure you of our complete support and cooperation.

I also wish to pay tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Samir Shihabi, Ambassador of the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, who guided the forty-sixth session of our Assembly with a competence, distinction, and effectiveness that I wish to emphasize today with pride. Another source of legitimate pride for us is the work accomplished by the Secretary-General of our Organization, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

(Mr. Brahimi, Algeria)

Only a few months have gone by since he began his term of office, and already the record is impressive. There can be no doubt that Mr. Boutros-Ghali has brought to the United Nations a spirit of initiative, determination, and lucid leadership which it needs so much to face the challenges posed by the fast pace of history at this century's end. The Agenda for Peace, his first annual report, along with his major statements and his remarks before the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and at the Jakarta summit of non-aligned countries, bespeak his vision and courage, which command our full support and esteem.

I cannot fail to reiterate here our congratulations to all the new Members of the United Nations and to welcome them to this forum.

Bearing as it does so much hope and promise, the end of the cold war and of the bipolar division of the world has not yet realized any of the hopes it has given rise to with regard to the promotion of peace and international cooperation. The spectre of war, the horror of famine and privation, the trampling of human dignity, and the denial of the right of peoples to self-determination still constitute the realities of the plight of many peoples.

In fact, the so-called world order remains a concept without substance for the overwhelming majority of mankind, whose economic and social situation is steadily deteriorating and who also have reason to fear that this new order is being established outside the bounds of the basic principles of the United Nations charter and without meeting the need to democratize international relations.

It is time to embark upon a genuine dialogue in order to shape the international relations of the future. This is a vital task of the United

(Mr. Brahimi, Algeria)

Nations, and the Organization's current prestige makes us believe that the time is ripe to embark upon such an enterprise. Never before has the United Nations seen so many hopes crystallized around it; never has it undertaken so many initiatives or put so many plans on the drawing board. Whether the United Nations initiatives and plans are met by acceptance and praise as is often the case, or critized, as sometimes happens, it is a fact that this more assertive presence of the United Nations is one of the most positive results of the major changes that have taken place on the international arena in recent years.

The Security Council summit held last January, the proposals submitted by the Secretary-General, the debates in the Economic and Social Council last July on the role of the United Nations system in the strengthening of international cooperation for development, and the results of the 10th summit of the Non-Aligned Movement held at the beginning of this month in Jakarta are all contributions to the joint thinking and action aimed at strengthening the United Nations and promoting its effectiveness.

It is hoped that this session of the General Assembly will be a new starting-point for the United Nations that will place it resolutely on the path of greater democratization and enhance its effectiveness in promoting peace, cooperation and development. This is exactly what has been called for in the Jakarta Message, which was presented right here by the current President of the Non-Aligned Movement, His Excellency President Suharto of Indonesia.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has more than ever a positive role to play in the establishment, through dialogue and the harmonization of views, of a just, well-balanced world order which ensures international peace and

(Mr. Brahimi, Algeria)

security, the right to development, and the promotion of more equitable economic relations. The United Nations constitutes a natural and privileged space for the action of the Non-Aligned, who intend in this way to particpate fully in the current process of restructuring and strengthening the United Nations. In this respect, restructuring initiatives should first of all aim at achieving a correct balance of prerogatives between the General Assembly and the Security Council. This undertaking should also meet the need to allow access to the Council for all major cultural, political and geographic groupings.

Algeria, which, since its independence, has undergone major transformations in all areas and which has taken significant steps towards progress and development, today faces a crisis which we do not underestimate and whose seriousness we in no way conceal. This crisis threatens the achievements made by our people through effort and sacrifice over three long decades. While analyzing without any self-indulgence the causes of this crisis, and while in no way trying to deny our own mistakes or the responsibilities of the State in this situation, we affirm confidently and with determination that our people has the means, capacity and will to overcome this crisis and to embark again on global development and the building of a society based on social justice and real democracy. This is the substance of the message behind the program of government approved recently by the High Committee of State.

This responsible posture in the face of those challenges permits us to recall as well the external constraints that have worsened the difficulties we face. This means that we expect our partners to cooperate readily in order to reduce the negative impact of an unfavorable external environment, or at least that they not hamper the efforts of our people.

(Mr. Brahimi, Algeria)

Algeria pursues a non-aligned policy aimed at promoting stability, peace, justice and cooperation in the region to which it belongs and in the world at large. In the Mediterranean, Algeria works for a new era of solidarity that responds to the aspirations of the peoples on both coasts of this great shared interior sea. Mechanisms for regular consultation and dialogue have been set up in order to promote the establishment of a comprehensive framework for peace, security, good-neighbourliness, solidarity and mutually advantageous cooperation.

The united Maghreb process which is rallying the energies of the member countries of the Arab Maghreb Union and which constitutes a fundamental aspiration of their peoples cannot but contribute to serving the cause of peace, relations of good-neighbourliness and cooperation between its different members and in the Mediterranean basin, the Arab world, and Africa.

(Mr. Brahimi, Algeria)

There are two issues that are of special importance to my country. Participation by the international community is required in dealing with both. For the first of these, we wholeheartedly call for a peaceful solution, in consonance with international legality, to the situation of tension that exists between Libya and the major Western Powers. It is a situation that stands in the way of the building of the Arab Maghreb and threatens the stability of the whole region. The international community should respond to the flexibility that characterizes the Libyan posture and to the initiatives and proposals that have been put forth.

On the other hand, the delays in the implementing the United Nations settlement plan for the organization of a self-determination referendum for the people of the Western Sahara continue to be the source of grave concern for us and for the international community as a whole. Algeria hopes that the two parties to the conflict will refrain from any action that could hamper or delay the implementation of the peace plan prepared jointly by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity with the full agreement of both parties. Algeria also hopes that the international community, through the United Nations and its Secretary-General, will redouble its efforts to implement the plan in order to reach the desired solution.

Of late, there have been positive developments in the disarmament issue. However, we look forward to a great deal of additional effort on the part of the nuclear States, which, we must state not the major Powers alone. In this context, we note with satisfaction the conclusion of negotiations on the issue of a chemical weapons Convention in Geneva. However, this development will have limited effects so long as it is not accompanied by concrete measures in the field of nuclear disarmament, especially in a region as sensitive as the Middle East, where a real nuclear threat persists.

(Mr. Brahimi, Algeria)

Only if earnest efforts are made in this direction and significant progress is achieved will that Convention - the conclusion of which is an accomplishment that we commend - respond to the concerns and expectations of all the parties concerned. Only then will it be possible to implement the Convention on a just non-discriminatory basis will and, thereby, ensure the universal acceptance necessary to this undertaking of genuine disarmament.

These were the observations and legitimate concerns expressed by the Arab countries through a resolution adopted a few days ago, which they expect the international community to take into account.

In spite of the significant progress achieved in the field of disarmament, it remains true that to address the issue of security in a manner that focuses on one specific region and shows concern for the security of the few without taking into account the interests and concerns of the many is to fall short of the objectives and ideals enshrined in the United Nations Charter. That is why the Non-Aligned Movement has just reaffirmed the unshakeable conviction of all its members that there is no peace or security other than peace and security for all, and that in order for peace and security to be lasting they must be addressed in all their dimensions and not only in the military aspects. In an increasingly interdependent world, peace and security should not be dissociated from their corollaries, namely economic development and the upholding of human rights.

While we express satisfaction at the progress achieved in the settlement of certain regional disputes, we note with concern the emergence of new crises in the wake of the cold war, at a time when many of the old crises and issues continue to await just and lasting solutions. Cambodia has embarked upon a process of peaceful settlement thanks to the will of the Cambodian people to

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build for themselves a future of peace and harmony, to the determination of the international community and the efforts of the United Nations which now supervises the implementation of a peace plan with the participation of Algeria.

The inter-community talks on Cyprus, under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, have reached a crucial stage. We hope that the remaining differences will be ironed out during the next round of talks, in a context of respect for the sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, and the non-aligned nature of the island.

The recent news that has reached us from South Africa revives hope that there will be a resumption of the process that began with the release of Nelson Mandela, President of the African National Congress and was endangered in recent months by the return of violence encouraged by the complacent attitude of the Government. While we welcome such positive developments and the encouraging prospects that pave the road toward the desired solution, we must stress that the experience of recent months makes it necessary to closely monitor developments in South Africa with a great deal of watchfulness and to lend full support to our brethren in that country.

The horrific plight of the Somali people is a glaring example of the deteriorating situation in many parts of Africa, a continent that has been increasingly marginalized and whose role has been greatly diminished. It is essential to learn a lesson from this tragedy, which underscores the need for urgent humanitarian aassistance for the Somali people side by side with the intensification of United Nations efforts to reach a political settlement to this crisis.

(Mr. Brahimi, Algeria)

The question of Palestine continues to be the crux of the Middle East conflict. Given our firm commitment to Palestine's freedom of choice, has accepted the option chosen by the Palestinian leadership that has made it possible to negotiate with a view to reaching a solution to the Middle East crisis. We in Algeria remain convinced that the success of the negotiations, begun within the framework of the process initiated in Madrid, depends on readiness by Israel to comply with international legality, especially in regard to the following:

First, United Nations resolutions must be adhered to and implemented. Secondly, the operations of settlement in the occupied Arab territories must be halted and existing Israeli settlements must be dismantled. Thirdly, the continuity of the different stages of the peace process must be guaranteed until a comprehensive solution is found that would guarantee to the Palestinian people the exercise of its full national rights, including its right to self-determination and to the establishment of its own State on its territory with Al-Quds as its capital.

My country is convinced that participation by the United Nations in every stage of this peace process in the Middle East can contribute to the attainment of the objective that would guarantee a just comprehensive peace in the region.

(Mr. Brahimi, Algeria)

We emphasize once again that the Palestinian problem and the Middle East conflict are one and the same thing. They are indivisible. Consequently, the solution which must be found cannot be partial or limited to certain parties involved in the conflict. In other words, and peace can be established in the region only if it is peace for all the parties concerned, including the Palestinians.

Algeria wishs to reaffirm here its commitment to the independance, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon within its internationally recognized borders.

It condemns the continued Israeli occupation of part of southern Lebanon as well as Israel's repeated attacks against Lebanon's territory and its people. We demand the total and unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli army from southern Lebanon in accordance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

We also reaffirm the need to preserve Iraq's unity and territorial integrity. It must be clear to all that any negative development in this respect will create grave problems for all the countries of the region. It is our hope that respect for international legality will lead to reconciliation between the States of that region which continues to suffer the horrific consequences of the devastating war that followed Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

In the same region, there has been another development whose gravity cannot be underestimated. It is Iran's illegal occupation of the island of Abu Mousa thus renegging on its commitments and agreements concluded with the United Arab Emirates. We support the demand of the Government of the United Arab Emirates that the unilateral measures taken by Iran be nullified and that a solution to the problem be found through negotiation in observance of legality and international law.

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In the face of the terrible plight of the peoples of former Yugoslavia, the major imperative on which all efforts should focus is to ensure the immediate return of peace to all of the territory of the former Yugoslavia, with respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all the republics that have emerged therefrom. In this respect, the situation which persists in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a source of grave concern because of the increasingly terrible crimes that are being committed there. The international community, and in particular the United Nations, must take every measure necessary in order to put an end to the plight of the entire Bosnian people and to the threats to peace and security in the region.

One of the most disturbing aspects of the current world situation is the constant exacerbation of the economic situation of the developing countries and negative developments that continue to rock the world's economy. The sharp slow-down in the growth of world trade, which declined from 8 per cent in 1988 to barely 3 per cent in 1991, the increasing deterioration in the prices of raw materials at an average 15 per cent pace in real terms in 1990, the persistance of the foreign debt problem of the developing countries with the attendant acceleration of the slow-down of growth in the developed countries, and the magnitude of the financial needs of the former USSR and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, show how great are the challenges to be met.

Given the new opportunities and the new challenges to be met in this period of profound change, the revitalizaion of international cooperation for development and strengthening the role of the United Nations system in this undertaking should be the high-priority task of the day.

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This requires first and foremost the existence of real political will. Some progress has been achieved in this direction. The declaration by the Security Council at its summit meeting last January recognized the close relationship that exists between peace and development. This recognition should be translated into increased agreement on the need to move the economic and social dimension from the secondary position it now occupies to the forefront and to make it a principal and permanent concern of the United Nations.

In fact, at a time when a great deal of thinking is taking place on the concept and the instruments of preventive diplomacy, the success of renewed growth and development in the countries of the South affect the credibility and the effectiveness of any attempt to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the areas of international peace and security.

The results of the Eighth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) held at Cartagena in February of 1992, the results of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held at Rio de Janeiro last June, and the General Assembly's adoption of a new United Nations agreement for the development of Africa in the 1990s, all constitute new milestones in our awareness of international interdependence and the need for renewed international cooperation.

One of the basic objectives that we must strive to attain in this particularly difficult situation in the third world is the need to ensure a bigger share in world trade for the developing countries, the formulation of a comprehensive strategy that addresses the issue of indebtedness and the reactivation of the flow of funds and investments from the developed to the

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developing countries. In general, the creation of favourable external conditions is a vital requirement in the case of the developing countries which are trying to carry out wide-ranging fundamental reforms at a very high social and political cost. This is a basic requirement on which the United Nations system should mobilize the international community.

The implementation of "Agenda 21" and the commitments that arise therefrom, especially with regard to financial support and transfer of technology, represent a major test both of the political will of the developed countries and of the capacity of our Organization, through the Commission on Sustainable Development, to ensure the implementation, follow-up and coordination of a programme which aims at bringing about real and creative changes in the concept of development and international cooperation.

There are new and vast horizons before the United Nations. Those horizons give the work of this session of the Assembly particular importance and substance. The international community must seize the opportunity to develop at this world forum an integrated approach to the promotion of peace, security, and stability in economic and social development and international cooperation. In so doing, it would contribute to the optimum utilization of our Organization's great potential.

Mr. ESSY (Côte d'Ivoire) (interpretation from French): We grieved to learn of the aviation disaster yesterday in Lagos, which caused the death of 163 members of the Nigerian military. On this sad occasion I should like to convey to the people and the Government of Nigeria our most sincere condolences.

First Sir, on behalf of the delegation of Côte d'Ivoire I congratulate you on your election as President of the current session of the General Assembly. The confidence expressed in you by the Assembly is recognition both of you personally and your professionalism and of the important role played by your country in the achievement of the noble objectives of our Organization.

I should also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Samir Shihabi, who discharged his responsibilities as President of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly with such talent and dignity.

Finally, I should not forget our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to whom I should like to address our most sincere congratulations on the vitality and ability he has demonstrated in the management of our Organization. His report, which provides an exhaustive view of the activities of the Organization, enables us to take up our debate with specific, current information.

We most warmly welcome all those States that have just joined the Organization, thus highlighting its universality.

Events in recent years have caused serious upheavals in international relations. The division of the world into two rival blocs is a thing of the past. The trend towards negotiation and emerging cooperation is the prelude to a new world order that has yet to take shape. Situations and certainties, which had in the past seemed immutable are changing, slowly but surely. We

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are currently witnessing political, economic, social and cultural transformations. We hope these developments, which seem to augur new international relations, will make it possible to meet the challenges of today.

The have-nots of the world greeted with great hope the end of the cold war, and with the end of the arms race looked to the future sure that the world was moving towards peace, justice and solidarity.

Unfortunately, while solidarity should have been strengthened, selfishness and the defence of short-term interests have intensified, to the detriment of cooperation for the mutual benefit of the various partners in international relations.

Today the developed countries and the major economic, monetary and financial institutions have found it necessary to link their assistance to the establishment of what they consider to be democracy in the recipient countries, for which it is now a matter of linking the grant of external financial resources not merely to an economic reform programme based on the rules of the market, but also to respect for political pluralism.

Regrettably, on the world scale, there is no longer a strategic or economic alternative that might counter this approach.

If democracy is taken to mean more justice and increased popular participation in the management of a country's affairs, the Ivorian Government can be proud of its record.

Indeed, the first version of the Constitution of Côte d'Ivoire, which has been in effect since independence, provides for a multiparty system, in its articles 6 and 7.

(Mr. Essy, Côte d'Ivoire)

In Côte d'Ivoire, the idea of democracy has always been part and parcel of the political process. Democracy and human rights have no borders. They are universal values, which should nevertheless have national roots. They cannot be imported, sold or bought, neither can they be imposed from outside.

In international terms, this democratic process should logically entail greater involvement by States, be they large, small or medium-sized, in the consideration and solving of international problems of common interest.

Therefore, it is not enough that the United Nations should become more universal merely within the General Assembly. This trend must also be reflected in the other principal organs if the Organization's democratic nature is to be enhanced.

In spite of the progress achieved in various fields, an overview of the map of the world indicates that the international landscape is still covered by large grey areas of real and potential conflict. The stability of States is shaken by violent religious, social, cultural and linguistic struggles, as well as by unusually grave economic problems.

The countries of the South in general, and African countries in particular, with their scores of refugees, are still prey to conflicts that seriously jeopardize the peace and security that are essential for their development.

In South Africa, while we welcome the considerable progress achieved in dismantling apartheid, we are saddened by the escalation of violence. In this regard, we must appeal most urgently to all our South African brothers to put an end to the violence, massacres and abuses of all types that continue to cast a pall over the country and further to complicate the already difficult and complex task of those who are striving to build in South Africa a

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democratic, non-racial system through dialogue and negotiation. We welcome the forthcoming meeting between Mr. Nelson Mandela and Mr. Frederik de Klerk, and we hope that the negotiations under way will lead to a resumption of the negotiations within the Convention for a Democratic South Africa.

Elsewhere in Africa internal conflicts with tragic consequences are still causing upheavals in Somalia, Rwanda and Liberia, to name but a few countries.

With regard to a country on our borders - Liberia - the Committee of Five, chaired by President Houphouet-Boigny and set up by the fourteenth session of the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), held in Abuja on 6 July 1991, met four times in Yamoussoukro and once in Geneva, in April 1992. The agreement that emerged from these many meetings, commonly called the Yamoussoukro IV Agreement, was endorsed by summit meetings of ECOWAS, the Organization of African Unity and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries as the best framework for finding a just and lasting solution to the Liberian crisis.

Nevertheless, military aspects of the implementation of the Agreement have caused difficulties, with regard to the billeting and disarming of the belligerents, essential steps for the holding of free, fair and democratic elections.

The appearance of a new faction, the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO), on the scene of the Liberian conflict, has created a new situation of insecurity, increasing the existing distrust between the parties to the conflict.

We hope that the new consultations under way, initiated by the President of ECOWAS and the Chairman of the Committee of the Five, will make possible reconsideration of the problems of Liberia as a whole in order more

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effectively to focus on the factors that will enable all the armed factions to apply in good faith the provisions of the Yamoussoukro IV Agreement.

We urgently appeal to all Liberians to go a step further and to begin a constructive dialogue that alone can effectively help the international community to enable them to find a lasting solution to their problems and to the future of their country.*

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* Sheikh Salem Sabah Al Saleh Al Sabah (Kuwait), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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For his part, President Houphouet-Boigny, who has been working tirelessly for peace in Africa and throughout the world, will fully support the process begun in order to solve the Liberian crisis so that the fraternal people of Liberia, to which we are linked by so many bonds, might finally have peace.

In Angola, after 14 years of liberation struggle against the colonizing Power followed by 16 years of fratricidal struggle, Côte d'Ivoire commends the signing of the peace agreements which occurred in Lisbon in May 1991. Côte d'Ivoire most earnestly hopes that the multipartite elections that are to be held on 29 and 30 September will take place under the best possible circumstances so as to enable the fraternal people of Angola freely to choose their officials and fully to concentrate on the enormous task of reconstruction and development that lies ahead.

In the Middle East, the Israeli-Arab conflict remains a major and constant source of concern despite the new peace initiatives that emerged from the historic Madrid meeting.

Hope, however, has been renewed owing to the recent negotiations during which we noted with satisfaction an encouraging attitude on the part of the parties to the conflict, which seem determined to move forward with the peace process.

The situation in the Persian Gulf still remains alarming, and the possibility of the conflict resuming cannot be ruled out. Hence we shall continue fully to support, as we did last year during our mandate in the Security Council, the complete implementation of all resolutions linked to the Gulf Crisis, especially Security Council resolution 687 (1991), of 3 April 1991, which lays down the conditions for a permanent cease-fire in the Gulf governing post-war relations between Iraq and Kuwait.

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Furthermore, the quest for increased stability in some States is accompanied by the troubling phenomenon of sometimes violent disintegration in other States, in Europe and in various areas of the developing world. The situation in the Balkans and the tragedy of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina are a perfect illustration of this.

Confronted with these various situations, we must seek a new approach to settling conflicts. Quite rightly, we are now stressing once again the need for preventive diplomacy, which would have the effect of identifying areas of potential conflict and stemming crises before they degenerate into armed confrontation.

That is why my country, Côte d'Ivoire, supports the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the capacity of the United Nations for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping. This report has the same objective as that of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), that is, to create mechanisms for the prevention, management and settlement of conflicts, the principle of which was adopted during the twenty-eighth regular session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU, which met in Dakar last July.

The concerns and the worries that we reiterated last year from this very rostrum, which pertained to signs of a slowdown in world economic activity, have unfortunately become reality, to the extent that we have seen a real decline in the growth rate of global production of the world economy in 1991, accompanied by a concomitant drop in the volume of world trade.

In this regard, we should emphasize the substantial drop in the growth level of imports of industrialized countries, the major export markets for raw materials produced by developing countries.

(Mr. Essy, Côte d'Ivoire)

The impact of such a situation on African countries has been catastrophic, since the recession in the industrialized countries has not only kept raw-materials prices at very low levels, but has also had the consequence of reducing the quantities exported, thereby causing a very substantial drop in the export earnings of African countries.

Nevertheless, in spite of the unfavourable economic environment, African countries - including my own, Côte d'Ivoire, in particular - have courageously continued to pursue efforts undertaken as part of the structural adjustment process and drastic economic reform, with all that this entails in terms of the risk of social unrest.

As regards my country, those measures have none the less allowed for the establishment of macro-economic balances, which means that we might achieve a 5 per cent growth rate by 1995.

However, in order to reduce as soon as possible the social cost of structural adjustment measures, we must resume the still-unfinished debate on North-South relations between rich and poor countries, between industrialized countries and those that do not have the means of paying their debts nor of relaunching their stricken economies.

In this regard, we should, in the financial sphere, come up with a final solution to external debt problems that takes into account debtor countries' actual repayment abilities. This restructuring of external debt should be supplemented by the granting of substantial financial assistance, on concessional terms, as was the case with Eastern Europe.

While we are asking developing countries to make ever-greater efforts and sacrifices, we see from the analysis of recent statements by International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank heads, Messrs. Michel Camdessus and

(Mr. Essy, Cote d'Ivoire)

Lewis Preston, that rich countries are the ones setting a bad example in managing the world economy. These countries, they say, are not conforming to any budgetary discipline, which ends up costing developing countries dearly.

Those officials also pointed out that only 5 of the 20 richest countries in the world have devoted 0.7 per cent of their gross national product to development assistance, in accordance with the objectives set by the United Nations. Even the International Development Association (IDA) today appears to be imperilled in that it is not sure that it will be able to obtain the $18 billion considered absolutely necessary for its functioning.

Contrary to this trend, we welcome Japan's decision to hold, in 1993, a conference on development in Africa.

As President Houphouet-Boigny has often said: "The real problem of Africa today is above all economic and financial". He also stated, recently at the OAU Summit in Dakar, that the only difference between developed and developing countries is that the former have the technological capacity to process our raw materials into finished products for their own consumption and to use any surplus for export, while the latter can only export their raw materials, be they agricultural, mining or mineral products.

Such a situation must change, and to this end, the assistance and cooperation of our northern partners should no longer restrict us indefinitely to the role of providers of raw materials but rather enable us, thanks to the processing of part or all of our raw materials, to also become consumer countries.

But pending this development, which should not be delayed, we producers of raw materials, be they agricultural, mining or mineral products, fervently hope that the markets for the majority of our commodities will be organized

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within the framework of appropriate international agreements that would take into account the best interests of both consumers and producers.

That is why I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to appeal most earnestly to the States members of the European Economic Community (EEC), whose constant support for developing countries has been unfailing, to take determined action, individually and collectively, in order to foster the forthcoming conclusion of new international agreements, particularly those relating to coffee and cocoa, negotiations on which are currently under way.

(Mr. Essy, Côte d'Ivoire)

This is also the place to affirm that, contrary to commonly-held views, we remain convinced, as far as we are concerned, of the ability of well-written international agreements on commodities to stabilize markets and thereby to foster the economic growth of countries that produce raw materials. Indeed, taking into account the overall importance of raw materials in the economies of developing countries, and in particular the extreme dependence of some of them on a single product or small number of products from which they draw their main source of revenue, we think it perfectly logical to acknowledge that these markets should be organized in such a way that, while guaranteeing regular supply for industries using these products, the prices remain stable so as not only to allow for decent earnings for the processing industries but also to ensure remunerative prices and predictable earnings for producer countries.

Furthermore, mutatis mutandis, such thinking underlay the idea of the common agricultural policy of the European Economic Community (EEC), the major aim of which was to ensure the security of food supplies within the boundaries of the community at prices that were reasonable for the consumer and both stable and remunerative for the rural population.

Indeed, no country in the world can remain indifferent to the drop in income of its peasants. The United States of America and the member States of the EEC have understood this so well that they spare no subsidy in helping their farmers keep their purchasing power on a par with their efforts. It is therefore difficult for us to understand why the same machinery that has functioned so well internally and regionally in the Western countries cannot be usefully adapted internationally within the framework of raw materials in the relationship between North and South.

(Mr. Essy, Côte d'Ivoire)

Taking all this into consideration, it is perfectly obvious that only the conclusion of international agreements aimed at promoting stability in the rates of raw materials at remunerative prices would foster the implementation of production policies guaranteeing the preservation of the environment. In this context, it is good that the Rio Conference emphasized the close link that exists between the deterioration of the environment, indebtedness, and the deterioration in the terms of trade. Indeed, Côte d'Ivoire, like many other countries, has had to intensify the exploitation of its natural resources in order to honour its international financial obligations.

This situation is not in the interests of sustainable development. For that, as agreed in Rio, the industrialized countries must, as a matter of urgency, take the necessary steps to help in the transition of our economies towards sustainable development, especially in implementing decisions aimed at the elimination of obstacles in the trade of raw or processed goods and the transfer of new and additional financial resources to developing countries.

In this regard, Agenda 21 has highlighted several ways to achieve the objectives with regard to the transfer of resources through the following machinery: through the special increase of resources in the form of the "Earth Increment" in the World Bank; through the global environmental facility that will meet next December in Abidjan and whose objective is to increase its resources from $1.1 billion to $4.5 billion; and through debt alleviation, especially for middle-income countries.

It is also worth noting that in Rio, several countries promised to increase their transfer of resources to developing countries, committing themselves to achieve 1 per cent of their gross national product to official development assistance by the year 2000. Some of them have announced special contributions. By way of example, I cite the EEC, which hopes to reach

(Mr. Essy, Côte d'Ivoire)

$4 billion, and Japan, which hopes to reach $8 billion in three years. We can only express our sincere gratitude for these fortunate initiatives, just as we commend those countries that have committed themselves to making contributions during the current session of the General Assembly.

Our hopes are placed in the Commission on Sustainable Development that is to meet at the ministerial level; its work will be decisive in following up on the implementation of Agenda 21 programmes and their integration. In this context, and on behalf of my delegation, I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to Mr. Maurice Strong for his magnificent work and to ask him to be kind enough to guide the first steps of the secretariat of that Commission, because in our view that is essential in order to guarantee the effective implementation and proficient and speedy follow-up of the commitments made in Rio.

As regards the critical economic situation in Africa, we remain confident of the ability of the international community to mobilize itself in the effective support of the efforts of the African countries to realize the aims of the new United Nations agenda for the development of Africa for the 1990s adopted by the General Assembly in December 1991. The elements of this new agenda, dealing with the last decade of the twentieth century, constitute a major challenge that Africa must meet with success if it is not to be irredeemably marginalized at the dawn of the twenty-first century, so full of promise for humanity.

That is why the African countries, aware of the importance of the current and future stakes, as well as of their primary responsibility in achieving growth and sustainable development, have firmly committed themselves to regional integration and to accelerating the democratization process of their internal institutions.

(Mr. Essy, Côte d'Ivoire)

That is why is it is important that conditions for growth and development in Africa be achieved as soon as possible, because they are quite obviously the sine qua non for the true and realistic exercise of the democracy that cements peace within African States, peace among African States, and peace between Africa and the rest of the world.

As President Houphouet-Boigny oftens says: "Peace and poverty make poor bedfellows." That is why we exhort the international community to show more understanding for the question of remunerative prices for raw materials, upon which many developing countries depend, especially in Africa. Africa needs to be considered by the rest of the world as a partner rather than a burden. The partnership it seeks implies dignity rather than dependency, mutual interests rather than charity.

The bipolar world that has held sway in the international order since 1945 has crumbled. Since the time of Alexander of Macedonia, great empires have arisen only to collapse in a process that has been broadly described by Professor Paul Kennedy in his Rise and Fall of the Great Powers.

Every century brings its share of innovations and surprises. The twentieth century which is now drawing to a close has brought great changes to human existence. It has seen people invent all sorts of instruments to advance thought, to cure as well as to kill. Today's world seems to have found unity through a certain number of values, among which is the primacy of law in international relations. Such a development can only strengthen the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace.

It is thus up to every State to support the activity of our Organization in order to enable it to carry out its difficult task effectively. My

(Mr. Essy, Côte d'Ivoire)

country, which has always made a determined search for peace the cornerstone of its foreign policy, will not fail to make its contribution to the building of this noble enterprise and to the shaping of the new world order which is emerging and which, to be solid and lasting, must be linked to the search for a world of peace, justice, and shared well-being.

Mr. AL-SHARA (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Syrian delegation, to congratulate the new President on his election to the presidency of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, particularly as our two countries and peoples enjoy bonds of traditional friendship. I should also like to express our appreciation to your predecessor, the permanent representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for the success and skill with which he presided over the proceedings of the previous session of the General Assembly. May we wish his sisterly country progress and prosperity.

I should also like to take this opportunity to reiterate to the Secretary-General of the United Nations our confidence and our appreciation of his unremitting efforts in the service of the international community and the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter. In that respect, we value the effort that has gone into the preparation of his report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" and many of the valuable ideas contained therein.

As is customary in this forum, we welcome the new States Members which have joined our international Organization and hope that their new membership will contribute to the process of enhancing its effectiveness and strengthening its role in formulating more democratic and equitable international relations.

For the third time, the twentieth century witnesses an important change in the political map of the world. The change is such that schools and libraries all over the world have become in need of a new atlas, just as they had in the wake of the two World Wars. We fear that, because of the continuing upheavals in the world the designers of that new atlas may have to leave a wide margin for possible new changes that may occur in the map of this planet as it crosses the threshold into the twenty-first century.

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

Fortunately, that great change in the political map of the world has not taken place through war, as was the case in the two previous instances. Otherwise, it would have meant the end of all life on earth. Regrettably, however, the change has not been totally devoid of tension and violence. It has carried the seeds of small-scale wars that have spread here and there for national, ethnic, religious, tribal, economic and social reasons.

At this historic juncture, the real concern is not only the number of victims claimed by such small wars or the scale of the destruction that may ensue, but rather, the possibility of the spread of the seeds of those small wars, in the North as well as in the South, in the absence of a world order that is capable of containing and addressing their causes.

This is the major challenge which faces the United Nations today. It would be paradoxical indeed if the twentieth century, whose grand bang of scientific and cultural achievements have been hailed by all, were to end with the whimper of small was that are waged by people with small primitive minds the international community cannot curb.

Many have rightly spoken of the non-implementation of United Nations resolutions and of the paralysis of its Security Council during the years of the cold war that used to rage between East and West. But the cold war has in effect been over for a few years now, and its demise has been officially declared by both sides. And yet, we find that the ultimate ambition of the Security Council today is no longer to stop the fighting and put an end to the massacres in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia, Afghanistan and other hotbeds of tension and conflict, but merely to try and deliver humanitarian assistance to some of the peoples of those unfortunate countries.

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

The end of confrontation between East and West ought not to lead to the end of concern for the fate of the many peoples and countries which are being torn apart by conflicts, as is happening today in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia, Afghanistan and other places; nor should it lead to the withholding from their peoples of the assistance that would help heal their wounds and enable them to reconstruct what has been destroyed by conflict and war.

If only a very small percentage of the sums that used to be spent by the two camps on the cold War were channelled to the assistance of peoples of the third world, such a small percentage would make it possible to overcome most of the difficulties and tragedies those peoples now face and to avoid further such disputes.

At a time when the world witnesses the disintegration of whole States and the outbreak of civil wars and conflicts, one must appreciate the exceptional efforts that led to saving the Lebanese people from the inferno of civil war and helping them on the road to national reconciliation through the efforts of the Lebanese themselves and the brotherly assistance and sacrifices of Syria. We hope that pledges made to reconstruct what the civil war destroyed in Lebanon and to contribute to the special fund created for that purpose will be honoured.

Since the end of the Second World War, the Middle East has enjoyed neither security nor stability because of the continuing Arab-Israeli conflict and its repercussions. But the convening of the Madrid conference last year has opened for the first time, as all acknowledge, a rare and historic window of opportunity to achieve a just and comprehensive peace based on international legality and the resolutions of the United Nations, particularly

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), which, according to the Charter of the United Nations, are binding and must be implemented by all parties to the conflict.

Almost a year has passed now since the convening of the Madrid conference. Ten months after the conference, the whole world came to realize that the peace talks between the Arabs and the Israelis were futile, because of the intransigence and the evasiveness of the previous head of the Israeli Government, who admitted publicly after his defeat in the elections that his intention was to go cn quibbling and prevaricating with the purpose of prolonging the negotiations for 10 more years.

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

It is also regrettable that the latest round of peace talks was concluded in Washington without the Israeli side changing the substance of its approach to the question of a full withdrawal from the Golan and the other occupied Arab territories, including Al-Quds, despite the readiness of Syria and the other Arab parties to commit themselves to all that is required of them in conformity with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). It appears that the change in policies and priorities claimed by Mr. Rabin's Government in comparison with those of Mr. Shamir's Government to date lacks both credibility and actual application.

The fact of the matter is that the great expectations and noticeable momentum which accompanied the latest round of negotiations were a result of the earnest contribution of the Arab side and the great impact of the Syrian document at both the regional and international levels. That comprehensive document contains the bases and principles of a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict in conformity with the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations, which were the basis for the convening of the Madrid Conference.

The international community has affirmed that the achievement of peace in the Middle East has always been and continues to be rooted in the inevitability of Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories that were occupied by force and war, and in securing the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people.

Those in Israel who believe that total peace can be achieved without a complete Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories are gravely mistaken. Those who also believe that the Israeli arsenal of mass destruction

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and its qualitative military edge can make it immune to the repercussions of the end of the cold war are equally mistaken. Saturating Israel with destructive and sophisticated weaponry cannot guarantee the true security of Israel as long as it continues to occupy the territories of others by force and to violate the rights of the Palestinian people, and as long as it lacks the human compass that may guide it to the shores of peace and security.

The road to a comprehensive, just and durable peace is clear and well defined; it remains for Israel to choose to take it. Any manoeuvres of partial withdrawals or interim steps will not bring peace either to the region or to Israel itself. The higher level meetings Israel demands are merely a ploy that is meant to undermine the framework and mechanism within which the Arab and Israeli parties met at the Madrid Peace Conference.

As declared by its leader, President Hafez Al-Assad, Syria wants an honourable peace which our people would accept, a peace in which not a grain of sand of our land is lost, no concession of any of our rights is made, and without deriliction of the duty of safeguarding the dignity of our nation. We want the peace of the brave, the peace that survives and lasts and guarantees the interests of all. But if there are to be games and ambushes no one could make Syria forsake its patriotic and national stand. There is no place for capitulation in our dictionary.

We have already voiced our readiness for a complete peace in return for a complete withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories and we reaffirm that now. That is our challenge to Israel from this rostrum, a challenge that has found no response to this day.

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

If comprehensiveness and justice were observed in arms control it would undoubtedly contribute to the consolidation of the security and stability we all long for. The subject of arms control would come within reach and be more effective in ensuring security and stability in the Middle East if it were based on the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, with nuclear weapons first and foremost, in accordance with criteria which have no bias in favour of one State at the expense of another and which apply to all countries of the region without exception within the framework of the United Nations and under its auspices.

Syria has never spared any effort in supporting United Nations resolutions and conventions relating to disarmament, particularly the non-proliferation Treaty to which Syria has acceded. Syria also signed the non-proliferation Treaty safeguards agreement on 25 February 1992. Syria has signed the Treaty on the prohibition of biological weapons and has consistently supported the initiative to make the Middle East region free of all nuclear weapons. Syria was the first officially to suggest at the 1989 Paris Conference on chemical weapons that the Middle East should be free of all chemical and biological weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

At a time when the whole world knows that Israel is the only State in the region to possess nuclear weapons in addition to its possession of other weapons of mass destruction, Israel has to date refused to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty and has also refused for decades to allow inspection of its nuclear installations and continues to do so today.

The logical option for all peoples of the world is to ensure security for all through complete disarmament and the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. The measures adopted by the Conference on Disarmament in

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relation to the conclusion of a draft convention on the prohibition, development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and their destruction will remain short of realizing the ambitions of the international community so long as they are not coupled with a similar prohibition on nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

The situation in South Africa continues to be a source of deep concern for my country. While we express our satisfaction over the repeal and amendment of some of the basic laws of apartheid, we would also like to express our deep concern over the persistence of repression and violence that the Government of South Africa continues to perpetrate against the population, at a great cost in victims to that population. Syria strongly supports the demands of the overwhelming majority of the people of South Africa for the establishment of a democratic and non-racial society.

Concerning Cyprus, we welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General to find a just and lasting solution to the Cypriot problem based on United Nations resolutions and taking into account the interests of the parties to the conflict.

Concerning the Korean peninsula, we reaffirm our support for the efforts of Democratic Korea to reunite the Korean peninsula peacefully and through negotiations. This would lead to prosperity for the entire Korean people while consolidating peace and stability in North-East Asia.

(Mr. Al-Shara, Syrian Arab Republic)

In view of all the issues and problems with which the international community is occupied, some of which I have mentioned in my statement, the peoples and countries of the world are looking to our international Organization to contribute towards the establishment of a world of peace and security. We believe that, in order to be able to realize the aspirations and hopes of the peoples of the world for instituting a new world order in which there is no aggression or occupation and which is based on international legality and the rules of international law, the United Nations must apply the provisions of its own Charter and implement its resolutions without bias, selectivity or double standards. As we find ourselves on the threshold of the twenty-first century, we hope to be able to reach a world of peace and justice in which stability and prosperity would prevail.

ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE MR. EDWARD FENECH-ADAMI, PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPBULIC OF MALTA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta.

Mr. Edward Fenech-Adami, Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta, the Honourable Mr. Edward Fenech-Adami, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. FENECH-ADAMI (Malta): It is with a special sense of satisfaction that I wish to congratulate Mr. Ganev on his unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. His country, Bulgaria, is a protagonist in an exhilarating democratization and liberalization process that is transforming a whole region and has already ushered in a new era in international relations. It is therefore most

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appropriate that, as a representative of his country and his region, he should be presiding over the General Assembly in these momentous and challenging times.

The exceptional nature of our times is reflected in the fact that over the last eight months 13 countries have become Members of the United Nations. We welcome these new Members, many of which are a direct product of the dramatic developments of the last few years. Their membership constitutes a further welcome affirmation of the universality of our Organisation.

In January this year a new Secretary-General took over the charge of the United Nations. His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali is a most respected and long-time friend of Malta. He has brought an impressive dose of energy and intellectual force to the task of restructuring the United Nations on the solid foundations left by his predecessor. The international community is indeed most fortunate in having individuals of such high calibre and dedication consistently in its service.

Bold and far-sighted leadership is of critical importance at the present juncture of international relations. Ours is a time when major challenges and exceptional opportunities compete with each other for attention and action; a time when hope, rather than fear, colours humanity's vision of its future - a vision which places the individual at the centre of all activity and which sees as an ultimate and cherished objective the creation of a just and prosperous community of nations living in peace and harmony with each other.

Events over the past 12 months have brought home the reality that the demise of the cold war did not automatically usher in the era of uninterrupted peace, stability and prosperity to which we are all aspiring. Vast problems still remain in the political, social and economic spheres, and at the national, regional and international levels. What is new today is the

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possibility for the whole international community to consider these problems as a shared burden standing in the path of a common vision. We therefore strive for their resolution on the basis of practical cooperation rather than seek to exploit them divisively in the framework of ideological confrontation.

At first glance, the emerging world order presents a dark tapestry of rekindled ethnic and national rivalries, massive economic disparities, extensive and irreversible environmental degradation, and horrific instances of human suffering. In the context of what is happening in the former Yugoslavia, in Somalia, and elsewhere, it may indeed sound ironic to identify the spirit of cooperation as the touchstone of this new world order.

Yet these unprecedented problems of our times have also generated an unprecedented determination for cooperative action at both the regional and the global levels. In cases like Yugoslavia and Somalia, the efforts so far undertaken have fallen far short of the needs. Yet the international community persists in its collective endeavour to achieve a peaceful solution of these problems. In this it finds encouragement in the progress being achieved elsewhere, especially in Cambodia, in Central America and in Angola.

A few days ago Malta joined a large majority of the United Nations membership in deciding to deny the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia - Serbia and Montenegro - its claim to succeed the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and consequently in calling upon it to reapply for United Nations membership in conformity with the provisions of the Charter. We did so in the light of our shared abhorrence of the atrocities that are taking place in the region of former Yugoslavia.

In the Middle East, the peace process launched in Madrid last year continues upon its fragile but persistent path. In South Africa, the hopes for an early and peaceful dismantlement of the policy of apartheid have ebbed

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and flowed in recent months in the wake of alternately encouraging and tragic events. In these instances too, however, the collective determination of the international community to promote a peaceful and lasting resolution of long-standing problems, on the basis of principles contained in relevant United Nations resolutions, is pre-eminent. Equally steadfast is the collective determination to bring peace and justice to other still-troubled peoples around the globe, in particular the peoples of Cyprus, of Afghanistan and of Mozambique.

In the year of the Rio Conference we are perhaps particularly conscious of the fact that the equitable and sustainable economic and social development of all peoples is not only a major objective in its own right; it is an indivisible component of international peace and security. The sharp economic and social disparities which continue to intensify, both within and among nations, pose a direct challenge to the hopes for peace and security raised by the emerging new order in international relations.

(Mr. Fenech-Adami, Malta)

There is growing recognition of the fact that an approach to these problems must be rooted in the notion of global economic interdependence - a notion that must inspire concrete action at the global, as well as at the regional, level on such questions as international trade, financial flows, transfer of technology and debt relief. Major projects of regional cooperation, such as those that are taking place in North America, Western Europe and South-East Asia should therefore be conceived of as stepping-stones towards increased trade and economic cooperation at the global level, rather than as attempts to create a set of monolithic and competing trading blocs in different parts of the world.

A successful and balanced outcome of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations would go a long way towards providing the necessary defences against any insidious and harmful fragmentation of world trade.

The disappearance of super-Power confrontation has perhaps had its most direct and visible impact in the field of disarmament. At the bilateral level, there have already been significant reductions in the nuclear and conventional arsenals of the two major Powers. The prospects for an indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and for a comprehensive test-ban treaty are encouraging. At its current session the General Assembly will be considering a draft convention for a comprehensive ban on chemical armaments, including their means of delivery, which has been finalized by the Conference on Disarmament.

Malta welcomes these developments and expresses the hope that they are the precursors to further cuts in strategic arsenals, especially as regards weapons of mass destruction, thereby releasing resources to be used for much-needed development purposes. At the same time, however, we should not

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lose sight of other, less rosy, aspects of the disarmament question, that now, more than before, assume greater relevance in the context of efforts towards reducing tensions and enhancing international security. This is the case in particular with regard to regional disarmament.

The proliferation of armaments, conventional or otherwise, at the regional level is a matter of serious concern. It is a factor that directly and negatively affects security and stability at both regional and broader levels. At the same time, it absorbs scarce resources that could otherwise be utilized for economic and social development.

The European experience, through the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), has been that the progressive reduction of mutual suspicion through the adoption of confidence- and security-building measures plays a significant role in creating the necessary conditions for disarmament at the regional level. Transparency is an important aspect of confidence-building.

In this context, the setting up by the General Assembly last year of the Register of Conventional Arms was an important first step, which Malta had indeed advocated as far back as the late 1960s. It is hoped that this initiative will be followed up, within the various regions, by determined efforts towards other concrete measures of confidence building.

The United Nations system is today being called upon to play a determining role in a vast and bewildering array of problems. Our Organization was originally conceived in the perspective of global cooperation, not of super-Power confrontation. After a 45-year gap, it is only now, with the dawning of an era of cooperation, that it can therefore begin to operate fully in pursuit of its essential vocation for peace and

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understanding among nations. It is essential that we all play our part in ensuring that it has the necessary resources, and appropriate structures, to fulfil its tasks.

The original United Nations structures combine the principle of equality with the pragmatic differentiation of roles and responsibilities arising from different capabilities and historical circumstances. In the field of peace and international security, the two complementary poles of the United Nations system are the General Assembly and the Security Council. A dynamic relationship between these two organs remains the prerequisite for the credible and effective functioning of the United Nations in the field of peace and international security.

Many of the issues related to these matters have been impressively examined in two reports prepared by the Secretary-General during the course of this year. The first is the report entitled "An Agenda for Peace". The second is his first annual report to the General Assembly. These reports contain a wealth of new ideas and proposals dealing with the evolving role of the United Nations in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping, and the promotion of economic and social development. These ideas provide us with an excellent stimulus to rethink the role that the United Nations can and needs to play if the end of the cold war is to become the beginning of a constructive peace.

In his reports, the Secretary-General also pays special attention to regional cooperation, which is increasingly being seen as a useful, indeed a necessary, complement to multilateral action at the global level.

Perhaps what is most needed in this regard is that regional and global actions be better harmonized and made to dovetail into each other. This is

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one reason why Malta proposed to the CSCE - and the proposal was endorsed at the Helsinki summit in July - that the CSCE be designated as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter.

Likewise, Malta has been urging for some years that the provisions for the establishment of technology development centres related to regional seas envisaged in the Convention on the Law of the Sea be put into effect in such obvious contexts as the Mediterranean, the Caribbean and the South Pacific. We have also urged that these functional centres should illustrate the new concepts of governance that have emerged as most appropriate to the new world order - that is, their governing bodies should include not only representatives of States, but also non-governmental bodies, whether set up on a national or on a plurinational basis. Such centres would be geared both to encouraging the transfer of technology and also, and perhaps more important, to promoting co-development of new, locally adapted technology.

As a European country, Malta seeks to participate as actively as possible in the many-faceted and far-reaching initiatives for regional cooperation that are unfolding on the European continent. Recent developments in our region have injected new life and vigour into longstanding institutions such as the Council of Europe and the Economic Commission for Europe, whose pioneering role in many areas of economic and social development at the regional level has always been recognized. From the darkest days of the cold war, the CSCE sought its vocation in the merging of the strict issues of disarmament with the wider aspects of cooperation in the economic, social and humanitarian fields. For nearly four decades the European Community has slowly and painstakingly forged a path towards regional economic and political

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integration which, in spite of the present difficulties, represents the best guarantee for a secure and prosperous future for all the peoples of this historically troubled continent.

Malta sees in its aspiration to become a full member of the European Community a natural culmination of its European identity and of the role it has played over the years in promoting European cooperation, within the Council of Europe, the Economic Commission for Europe and the CSCE. For us, membership of the European Community is an overriding political objective founded upon the conviction that such membership offers us the best prospects for political, economic and social development while permitting us to play our rightful role in a unique experiment for regioral integration.

(Mr. Fenech-Adami, Malta)

Our geographical location in the centre of the Mediterranean has also made us conscious of the issues which were so effectively highlighted at this year's United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, notably the awareness of the fragility of our planet Earth and the intimate relationship that exists between human development and ecological stability. The General Assembly at this session has an important task in following up the decisions taken at Rio, with regard both to the implementation of the proposals and recommendations contained in Agenda 21 and also to the establishment of the new commission for sustainable development.

In this context, Malta shares the view that, in the endeavour to restructure and adapt the United Nations system better to deal with the issues of the new world order, a revitalized role could be found for the Trusteeship Council as a guardian of the common heritage of future generations, to replace its fast disappearing role as trustee of dependent Territories.

Over the 28 years of its United Nations membership, Malta has taken particular pride in identifying its commitment to multilateralism, especially through its many initiatives on issues related to the environment as it constitutes a common concern of mankind. It is worth noting that this year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of Malta's proposal to the General Assembly that the seabed and ocean floor be reserved exclusively in the interests of mankind. Also this year we have been gratified to see our latest initiative, related to the protection of climate for present and future generations, resulting in the signing of the Framework Convention on Climate Change by over 150 nations. We earnestly hope that the ratification of the Convention will proceed quickly to ensure its early coming into force.

(Mr. Fenech-Adami, Malta)

The basic starting-point and the goal of our activities is the well-being of the individual in society. The importance of the human dimension in all our endeavours should not and cannot be underestimated. It is in this context that Malta attaches fundamental importance to issues of human rights. Over the years, the United Nations has elaborated major instruments relating to human rights, starting with the Universal Declaration and leading up to the Covenants on civil and political, economic, social and cultural rights, and the Convention against torture, to all of which Malta is a party.

Collective action aimed at ensuring the effective protection of the rights enshrined in these documents should not, in our view, be unduly constrained by arguments over issues of national sovereignty. We believe that the Commission on Human Rights and other relevant bodies should have their mandates enlarged beyond their present monitoring role along the lines of the relevant institutions within the Council of Europe. We look forward to the United Nations Conference on Human Rights due to be held in Vienna next year, in the hope that effective and bold steps will be taken in the endeavour further to safeguard and guarantee the fullest possible enjoyment of human rights at the individual level throughout the world.

This year the General Assembly will be holding special commemorations on the conclusion of the Decade for Disabled Persons and on the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Action Plan for the Elderly. Over the years, Malta has taken an active role on the question of the elderly and the aged, a subject which it first brought to the attention of the General Assembly in the late 1960s. Today Malta hosts an International Institute on Aging that plays a leading role in the promotion of new ideas and training in the field of ageing.

(Mr. Fenech-Adami, Malta)

1995, the year marking the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, will be devoted to two important conferences relating to social development - the World Summit on Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women. We welcome these, together with the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, as a further indication of the growing commitment of our Organization to the importance of the human dimension in international cooperation - a commitment which has been reinforced by the recent creation of the Office of Humanitarian Affairs within the Secretariat and which, as our Secretary-General so eloquently states in his report to the General Assembly, is renewed daily through the quiet heroism of the many individuals working in the field under the aegis of the United Nations throughout the globe.

In spite of the many difficulties and recognized weaknesses, we all acknowledge how fortunate our generation is in its possession of such a global organization as the United Nations, founded upon a Charter which encapsulates the highest and most lasting ideals of humankind. It is my privilege to take this opportunity to rededicate the commitment of the Government and people of Malta to the United Nations.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Edward Fenech-Adami, Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. ACHARYA (Nepal): I have the pleasure to extend to Mr. Ganev the warm congratulations of the delegation of Nepal on his unanimous election to the presidency of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. We are happy to have an eminent person like him, with wide experience and skill, to guide our deliberations at this particularly important stage in the history of

(Mr. Acharya, Nepal)

the United Nations. I take this opportunity to express the great appreciation of my delegation to Mr. Samir Shihabi, who presided over the forty-sixth session with great distinction.

I should also like to pay a tribute to our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his dedication to the ideals of the United Nations. His statesmanship and wise leadership are crucial in our collective efforts towards realizing the vision of the Charter.

The pace of change in the world has presented humanity both with promises and with challenges. The events of the last few years have underlined the universal applicability of the Charter of the United Nations. Its validity as a universal guide has withstood the test of time and flux. Confidence in the Organization as the central agency for upholding the rule of law and as a forum for harmonizing the actions of nations has never been greater. We have seen a united international community, acting on the precepts of the Charter, overcome an act of aggression. After decades of paralysis, the Security Council is functioning as envisaged in the Charter. Efforts to revitalize the role of the United Nations in the economic and social fields have gained momentum. This unparalleled resurgence of faith in the United Nations is best symbolized in the admission of 20 new Members in a single year. We are closer than ever before to the cherished goal of universal membership.

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A period of rapid changes is also a period of uncertainties. The old global order has passed but the new order is still very fluid. At this threshold of a new era in international life, we have a broad framework for a better future in the Charter of this Organization. The challenge before the United Nations is to harness the new mood and dynamism in international life and bring them to bear on the global problems facing mankind. It is the challenge to seize the opportunity to end war, to protect the dignity and worth of the individual, to ensure freedom and the rule of law and to promote economic development. In an interdependent world, the United Nations is indispensable for international cooperation.

The task is by no means simple. In one single year, there have been upheavals of epic proportion: the break-up of political entities of long standing and brutal ethnic and religious wars. Narrow nationalism is threatening the norms of a stable international order. The cost in terms of human suffering has been appalling. The horrors of Somalia and of Bosnia and Herzegovina force us to ask if we, the peoples of the United Nations, are really determined to combine our strength to maintain international peace and security. The persistence of widespread poverty and destitution forces us to ask if we are indeed resolved to employ international machinery for the economic and social advancement of all peoples.

The historic summit-level meeting of the Security Council in January this year was an important landmark in the search for answers to these and other questions. That meeting launched a serious search for new ideas and provided an impetus to meet new situations in the world. As the Secretary-General has pointed out, the tumultuous events of the last few years have already driven home several lessons: the need for democratization at the national level with

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a corresponding process at the global level; the defence of human rights, including minority rights and the right to development; the need for new ways to prevent internal and inter-State confrontations, including the increasing use of regional arrangements; and universal acceptance of the rule of law transcending changing perceptions of expediency.

These observations form the core of the Secretary-General's report, "An Agenda for Peace". Several of the Secretary-General's recommendations can and should be implemented immediately. These relate to the more effective use of the traditional forms of peace-keeping, the safety of peace-keeping personnel, and the finances involved. His recommendation for greater resort to fact-finding missions is equally pertinent. Some other recommendations raise fundamental issues related to the perception of an international organization, its role vis-à-vis State sovereignty, and the role of the Secretary-General himself. My delegation looks forward to a full-scale discussion of this important document during the present session.

It is obvious that there is today a greater need for the United Nations to address itself more seriously to the great divide between the rich and poor nations. This, along with the universalization of a human rights regime, is a fundamental issue of the new era.

As a least developed country, Nepal accepts the principal responsibility for its economic and social development. Our development policies are directed towards creating a basic infrastructure for development. Human resources development is a priority with us. We consider it extremely important to improve the living conditions of our people, to raise the level of literacy, improve basic health and nutrition, and reduce the rate of infant mortality. We are committed to these goals because we believe that it is the human being and not the State which has the ultimate right to development. We

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fully share the view that these goals can be attained only in a society that is committed to the inalienable right of its people to elect their own leaders in free and honest exercise of their will. We have already put in place the foundations necessary to achieve these objectives. Principal among them are the constitutional guarantee of political pluralism, the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, and safeguards for human rights. We now have the legal framework to enable people locally to take primary responsibility for their own development. With the basic political and legal grounds in place, I wish to reiterate our appeal for measures to reach the targets set out in the programme of action adopted by the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. While expressing deep gratitude for the generous assistance we have been receiving from donor countries and multilateral agencies, we look forward to increased cooperation to complement our own efforts to meet the needs of the poorest of our poor.

It is now universally recognized that, if development is to be possible, the life-sustaining ecological systems must be preserved, and that development alone can make it possible to safeguard the environment. It is imperative to improve the living conditions of the poor in developing countries so that they are not forced to destroy the ecological basis of their children's future to meet the immediate challenges of sheer survival. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in June this year was the most potent expression of global interdependence. The Conference has established that developing countries need to mobilize their own resources for sustainable development. It obliges developing countries to take global environmental consequences into consideration in their development planning. It has also established the right of developing countries to development. It has

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underscored the need for the transfer of additional resources and technology from industrialized countries to enable developing countries to fulfil their responsibility to safeguard the environment for present and future generations. Equally important, the Conference has established that developed countries need to reduce the great burden they impose on the environment. The Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 place people at the centre of concern. Agenda 21, with its far-reaching implications, can be the centerpiece of a mutually beneficial international cooperation. Nepal sincerely hopes that the philosophical commitment of Rio will be followed through and strengthened. We hope that establishing a high-level commission on sustainable development will receive the utmost priority it deserves during this session of the General Assembly.

While speaking of international cooperation in economic and social fields, I appreciate the ongoing efforts to enable the Economic and Social Council to play the role envisioned in the Charter. Political justice will mean little if the health and happiness of people, especially those in developing countries, are ignored. Indeed, global economic and social development alone can constitute the lasting foundation of international peace and security. We welcome the serious and out-of-the-ordinary approach of the 1992 session of the Council as the first tangible move towards restructuring set in motion by General Assembly resolution 45/264. The holding of the first high-level segment of a regular session of the Council was a promising beginning. Also important was the examination of operational activities including the workings of organs and agencies of the United Nations family in economic and social fields. The times call for an integrated approach to economic and social issues in the field as well as at headquarters. They

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demand that we avoid inter-agency competition, duplication and waste of limited resources by improving coordination among agencies, including the Bretton Woods institutions. My delegation has noted with appreciation the Secretary-General's determination to pursue restructuring of the Secretariat to meet these larger goals.

One of the most satisfying reforms undertaken during the last year has been in the area of coordinating humanitarian assistance. My delegation welcomes the establishment of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and expresses its warm appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Ambassador Jan Eliasson for his good leadership. We have already seen several examples of effective balance between principles and operational guidelines, improved coordination and governance. The situations in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia present unique tests of international commitment in this area. Indeed, it might not be too far-fetched to visualize the operation of effective humanitarian emergency assistance and the equally important roles of follow-up rehabilitation and development phases as new arms of the United Nations in preventive diplomacy and peacemaking.

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The relationship between freedom and democracy, on the one hand, and peace and stability, on the other, needs no reiteration. Nepal rejoices in the resurgence of democracy in various parts of the world in recent years. We strongly support this trend, which we believe to be in full conformity with the purposes of the United Nations. Developments in recent years have made it clear that, without respect for human rights, other achievements will have little meaning. The starting-point of democracy is the recognition and worth of each human individual. Respect for human rights alone makes freedom meaningful. The protection and promotion of human rights are becoming a common basis for international cooperation. Respect for human rights is an essential condition for the conduct of international relations in a spirit of openness, trust and confidence. The realization by many peoples within well-established political entities of their right to self-determination has raised the complex question of the rights of minorities. Clearly, absolute self-determination of each minority would have unforeseen consequences for the system of international relations. Clearly, multi-ethnicity, cultural and religious pluralism would continue to enrich most of the nations of the world. However, it is a duty incumbent on governments to ensure that members of minority groups are guaranteed the full enjoyment of the basic human rights common to all. It is also a duty incumbent on governments to ensure special protection when needed. The current upheavals in various parts of the world underscore the need for the United Nations to work out principles that can serve as common points of reference for the peaceful resolution of conflicting aspirations.

The historic Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, unilateral disarmament decisions taken by the United States and the Russian Federation, and the agreement reached between the two countries this summer are crucial steps

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towards lower levels of armaments and greater security. There is an overwhelming consensus today that the opportunity provided by the uniquely favourable international relations must be seized in order to achieve a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Events in the Persian Gulf have made the non-proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction the subject of global focus. My delegation sincerely hopes that at this session the General Assembly will be able to adopt the long-awaited Convention on chemical weapons, the first comprehensive international instrument to outlaw a whole class of weapons of mass destruction. In this context, Nepal welcomes the recent agreement between our two neighbours, India and Pakistan, on chemical weapons.

We have been following events in the territory of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with utmost concern. The use of brute force against the civilian population, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, has been appalling. We find the policy of forced mass expulsion abhorrent. We cannot accept the use of force to change internal or external borders. Nepal joins in the international demand that parties to the conflict respond immediately to the successive resolutions of the Security Council. We appeal to the European Community to redouble its efforts, in cooperation with the United Nations, to seek a negotiated settlement of the crisis in the Balkans. Nepal welcomed the extraordinary session of the Commission on Human Rights devoted to Yugoslavia. We look forward to the report of the Secretary-General on the findings of the Special Rapporteur on allegations of grave violations of human rights throughout the former Yugoslavia. We pay a tribute to the personnel of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), the United Nations humanitarian agencies and the International Committee of the Red

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Cross, which have been doing an outstanding job in the most difficult circumstances.

My delegation reiterates its full support for the territorial integrity and non-aligned character of Cyprus. We hope that the October round of talks under the good offices of the Secretary-General will produce the desired results.

Nepal has welcomed the implementation of the United Nations plan for Cambodia. We reiterate our appeal to all Cambodian parties to cooperate fully with the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) for the successful conclusion of this important United Nations mission. I take this opportunity to express my Government's appreciation to Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for the great efforts he has been making to ensure the successful implementation of the plan for Cambodia.

We are following with keen interest talks between North and South Korea, now fellow Members of the United Nations. We sincerely hope that these bilateral talks will facilitate the fulfilment of the wishes of the Korean people for peaceful national reunification.

Nepal is gravely concerned over the violence and the deaths of innocent civilians in Kabul. We appeal to the various Afghan factions to end the cycle of violence and to engage in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the war-torn country.

Events of the past year have not diminished the urgency of finding a solution to the Middle East conflict on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Israel and the Palestinian people must recognize each other's rights: the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including their right to form a State of their own, and the right of Israel to exist within secure and internationally recognized

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borders. The Government of Nepal strongly supports the continuing efforts of the sponsoring Powers of the Middle East peace process to bring about a negotiated settlement of the crisis.

South Africa is today at a critical juncture. Negotiations thus far have indicated that difficulties in the establishment of a united non-racial democratic South Africa are not insurmountable. Violence should not be allowed to dampen hopes for a peaceful end of apartheid.

My delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General and the endorsement by the Security Council of his proposal for involvement of the United Nations in order to put the dialogue on track again. My delegation hopes that the Pretoria regime will respond positively to the proposals contained in the report, expecially those relating to ending the violence.

As I said at the beginning of my statement, the vision of the Charter is more valid today than ever before. It is, however, clear that models and policies of the past are not adequate to meet today's global issues. The magnitude and severity of economic and social problems in many countries of the world today are unprecedented. The emergence of the Security Council as the central instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security, as intended by the Charter, is a welcome development. The United Nations must seize this historic opportunity to promote with equal vigour and urgency international cooperation in the economic and social fields. The precepts of the Charter should be our guide in bringing in a new era of international relations. This family of nations must strive to create a world where all people are entitled to political freedom, economic and social justice, a clean environment and full human rights.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.